



**KEMPSEY**  
Shire Council

## **DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT**

14<sup>th</sup> February 2006

**DSDS2            MID NORTH COAST FARMLAND MAPPING  
PROJECT  
FILE: 719 DNM**

### **SUMMARY:**

The Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority has contracted the Department of Planning (DoP), Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Department of Primary Industries (DPI), with DoP as co-ordinator, to map good quality agricultural land on the Mid North Coast.

The mapping of high quality agricultural land will assist the DoP in protecting good agricultural land from urban and rural residential development.



### **Background**

Agriculture is an important industry on the north coast. Increasing urban and rural residential development has eroded the availability of agricultural land, resulting in negative social and economic impacts and conflicts between farming and non-farming communities.

The Northern Rivers Farmland Protection Project (2005) has been completed as a matter of priority.

An important recommendation in the Northern Rivers Farmland Protection Project (2005) is that the farmland maps be used as a strategic settlement tool rather than an agricultural resource tool. The maps in the Northern Rivers Farmland Protection Project (2005) will show areas where urban and rural residential development should not be targeted. The subdivision, development and use of

rural land will still remain under Councils Local Environmental Plans (LEP).

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the project is to map good quality agricultural land on the Mid North Coast, to protect important farmland from urban and rural residential development.

## **The Project**

Soil landscape mapping prepared by the former Department of Land and Water Conservation will form the base data for the study. Councils and farming groups from Clarence Valley in the north to Port- Macquarie – Hastings in the south, will be required to provide local knowledge on soil types and landscapes and progress on local strategic planning projects.

The project will form part of the Mid North Coast Regional Strategy that is planned to commence early in 2006.

## **The Project Team**

The project team comprises of representatives from the DoP, Grafton, DNR and DPI, with specialists in planning, soil survey, agriculture and natural resources. Farmers' reference groups in the Clarence, Coffs-Bellingen-Nambucca area and Macleay-Hastings will provide important local knowledge, whilst staff at Councils throughout the Mid North Coast will provide information on local strategic planning projects.

## **Time Frames**

Work on the project has already started with staff attending an information session at Macksville on 28 November 2005. Preliminary mapping will be completed at the end of April 2006, with a preliminary report and recommendations completed in August 2006. The final maps and report are expected at the end of March 2007.

## **REPORT IMPLICATIONS:**

- ***Environmental***

***The project will contribute to strategic planning of the Shire, which is anticipated to result in better environmental outcomes.***

- ***Social***

*It is anticipated that a regional approach to strategic land use planning will have community benefits.*

- ***Economic (Financial)***

*The project aims to protect quality agricultural land which will have a positive economic effect on the farming industry. However, there may be impacts on the ability to develop farmland for other land uses.*

- ***Policy or Statutory***

*It is anticipated that the project will result in a requirement for Council to have due consideration to protecting identified quality farming land.*

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That Council note the report.**

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**R B Pitt**  
**DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**